

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. In a network of devices, a method for monitoring the configuration
2 and/or status of said devices, comprising the steps of:
3 2. launching a device monitoring tool on at least one of said devices on said
4 network;
5 3. said monitoring tool launching one or more data collectors on one or more
6 target devices, said target devices being the devices on the network that are to be
7 monitored;
8 4. said data collectors collecting status and configuration data about target
9 devices and passing said data back to said monitoring tool;
10 5. said monitoring tool uploading said data to a central site; and
11 6. at said central site, loading said data into a database.

1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of
2 accessing said database to obtain information about said target devices.

1 3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein said step of accessing
2 said database comprises the steps of:
3 4. using a web browser, sending a request for information to said central site
4 via the Internet;
5 5. at said central site, issuing a command to the database to retrieve the
6 requested information; and
7 6. sending the retrieved information back to the web browser via the Internet.

1 4. The method as recited in claim 3, further comprising the step of
2 formatting the retrieved information into a report format prior to the step of sending the
3 retrieved information back.

1 5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of uploading the
2 data to a central site comprises the steps of
3 6. parsing the data into packets;
4 7. transmitting the packets separately to the central site; and
5 8. at the central site, recombining the packets to recreate the data.

1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of
2 accessing a configuration file to determine which data collectors are to be run which
3 target devices.

1 7. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 said monitoring tool communicating with the central site to determine if
3 newer releases of the monitoring tool or the data collectors exist, or to determine if there
4 are additional data collectors; and
5 if newer releases exist or if there are additional data collectors,
6 downloading the newer releases or additional data collectors from the central site.

1 8. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of:
2 prior to launching the one or more data collectors on the one or more target
3 devices, starting a remote analysis program on the one or more target devices, the remote
4 analysis program for monitoring and managing the execution of the data collectors on the
5 one or more target devices.

1 9. A system for monitoring the configuration and/or status of devices
2 on a network, comprising:

3 a monitoring application to be run on a first device on the network, said
4 monitoring application being configured to coordinate the monitoring of one or more
5 target devices on the network;

6 data collector modules to be run on the one or more target devices, the data
7 collector modules being configured to collect configuration and/or status data about said
8 target devices, said data collector modules being launched on said one or more target
9 devices by said monitoring application;

10 an upload application to be run on said first device, said upload application
11 being configured to receive said data from said data collector modules and upload the
12 data to a central site.

1 10. The system as recited in claim 9, further comprising a remote
2 analysis application to be run on said one or more target devices, said remote analysis
3 application being started on said one more target devices by said monitoring application,
4 said remote analysis application being configured to monitor and manage the execution of
5 the data collectors on said one or more target devices.

1 11. The system as recited in claim 9, wherein said upload application
2 parses said data into packets before uploading the data the central site.

1 12. The system as recited in claim 9, wherein said monitoring
2 application accesses a configuration file to determine which data collectors are to be run
3 which target devices.

1 13. The system as recited in claim 9, wherein said data is stored at said
2 first location, and wherein said first location comprises a graphical user interface for
3 viewing said data.

1 14. The system as recited in claim 9, further comprising means for
2 accessing said data at said central site.

1 15. The system as recited in claim 14, wherein the data at said central
2 site stored in a database, and wherein said means for accessing the data at said central site
3 comprises a web browser that can send data access requests to said central site.

1 16. The system as recited in claim 15, wherein said web browser
2 processes applets, said applets being configured to send data query requests to said
3 database at said central site.

1 17. The system as recited in claim 9, wherein said monitoring
2 application is configured to communicate with the central site to determine if a newer
3 release of the system is available, and if a newer release of the system is available, said
4 monitoring application being configured to download and install the newer release of the
5 system.

add a 3?